

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Other
☐ Charter ☐ Title I ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Ivy Sherman

Official School Name: Brookside Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
940 Stanton Ave
Baldwin, NY 11510-2428

County: Nassau State School Code Number*: 280210030001

Telephone: (516) 377-9318 Fax: (576) 377-9427

Web site/URL: baldwinschools.org E-mail: shermani@baldwin.k12.ny.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. James Mapes

District Name: Baldwin UFSD Tel: (516) 377-9200

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Mary Jo O'Hagan

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|----------|---------------------|
| 7 | Elementary schools |
| 1 | Middle schools |
| | Junior high schools |
| 1 | High schools |
| | Other |
| 9 | TOTAL |
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 18444

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 17330

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city
- ☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
- ☒ Suburban
- ☐ Small city or town in a rural area
- ☐ Rural
4. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
- If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	7			0
K	23	13	36	8			0
1	23	17	40	9			0
2	13	19	32	10			0
3	16	18	34	11			0
4	20	24	44	12			0
5	16	23	39	Other			0
6			0				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							225

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: _____ % American Indian or Alaska Native
 _____ 3 % Asian
 _____ 76 % Black or African American
 _____ 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 _____ % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 _____ 8 % White
 _____ % Two or more races
 _____ **100 % Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 7 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	7
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	15
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	216
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.069
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6.944

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0
 Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %

Total number students who qualify: 10

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 6 %

Total Number of Students Served: 14

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	99%	95%	96%	95%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	8%	8%	8%	8%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

In the 2007-08 school year one teacher transferred to the secondary level within our district. Because we have only 13 full time teachers, one teacher represents 8%. All other turnover rates were due to retirements.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	100	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Brookside Elementary School in Baldwin, New York, is a small, friendly, K-5 public school located in Nassau County on Long Island, about 20 miles outside of New York City. Our 225 students are taught by 12 highly qualified (as defined by New York State), certified classroom teachers. Our diverse student population, 92% Black, Hispanic, and Asian, come from predominantly middle class families where both parents work full-time, education is valued and parents are actively involved. A large percentage of our students' parents work in various city agencies in New York City, such as the Department of Education, the Police Department, etc. Baldwin is a suburb that has been slowly changing over the years to include a greater minority population of homeowners.

The vision of the teachers and staff at Brookside School is to provide a rigorous yet nurturing environment where on-going academic, social and emotional support is provided so all students can realize their potential. Our goal is to provide each student with the tools to maintain high standards and respect for themselves and others and a willingness to take risks when solving problems. Over the last five years, the staff has worked hard to adapt a more personal and individualized approach to educating each student. Six years ago when the staff was introduced to the concept of learning to assess each student's individual needs, in all subject areas on a regular basis, there was concern but not opposition. The teachers recognized their "teaching" comfort zone was about to change. Change always brings anxiety, but the Brookside teachers were ready to try something new. In fact, they welcomed it! They knew they had to do more to meet the needs of the changing population, both culturally and academically.

Because Nassau County has some of the highest property taxes in the country, families here regularly need two incomes to maintain their homes and lifestyles on Long Island. More and more students are attending after-care programs at 3:00PM. Though education is highly valued in our community, parents have significantly less time to spend with their children reviewing classwork and homework. As a result, there was a need to restructure instructional time during the school day to align more effectively with the new dynamics of today's families. The staff was ready and willing to better meet the needs of the community. In addition, during the last five years, we have made systemic changes to address both the strengths and weaknesses of our students. These changes have resulted in increased student achievement, fewer referrals for Special Education services, and a greater love of learning. Evidence of our philosophical shifts in the collection of information and pedagogy are clearly visible in our data trends.

From the moment you enter Brookside School, you can feel the warmth emanating from our students and staff. The size of the student body lends itself to a very intimate atmosphere. Each and every staff member knows every child. A student at Brookside cannot help but feel special because each is treated with their individuality in mind. Our vision and goal is achievable because we know what each child needs to be successful academically, socially and emotionally. Brookside School is worthy of Blue Ribbon status because it embodies what an elementary school should be. Brookside has small classes where instruction is rigorous yet entirely differentiated in literacy and math. The atmosphere explodes with student creativity, kindness and amiability. It is a place where students on all levels are empowered to be independent thinkers and learners and are held accountable for their achievements as well as their failures. At Brookside School, each child is recognized for his or her gifts and talents, and all cultures are valued and celebrated.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Although New York State formally tests all students in grades 3 – 8 in English Language Arts and mathematics since the 2005-2006 school year, the benchmark indicators/high stake scores remain in grades 4 and 8. Prior to 2006, only students in grades 4 and 8 were formally tested by New York State in English Language Arts and mathematics. The percentage of students achieving proficiency or better on New York State standardized tests at Brookside in English Language Arts has risen in steady and sustainable increments over the past five years in grade 4. In addition, students in grades three and five have shown steady gains in their achievement levels since testing began in those grades in 2006. The state uses performance levels 1 through 4 to indicate whether or not a student has met the learning standards for a particular content area. Level 1 indicates a student's performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at a particular grade level; Level 2 demonstrates a partial understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at that grade level; Level 3 demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected and Level 4 demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at that grade level. Since we only test approximately 40 students per grade, each student represents slightly over 2% of our overall score on any assessment. For example, if only one student achieves below a Level 3 in any given grade level on any of the assessments for that grade, then our score is approximately 97.5%. In the 2003-2004 school year, 78% of students in grade 4 met the learning standards (Levels 3 & 4) on the NYS English Language Arts assessment. In the 2007-2008 school year, 97% of fourth graders met the standards and 100% the year before.

In mathematics, the number of students meeting the standards in grade 4, since the 2003-2004 school year, has remained consistently high; between 95% and 100%. Since students in grades 3 and 5 have only been tested since 2006, between 97% and 100% of the students in grade 3 have met the standards over the last three years. In grade 5, the percentage of students meeting the standards has been between 79% and 100%, with the scores rising steadily over the last three years.

At Brookside School we have the bonus of small class size. It is almost unconscionable if every student does not meet the standards. Meeting the varying needs of each student is the foundation of the systemic changes we have made. There were no excuses for not differentiating instruction. Teachers just needed to be taught how. Perfect circumstances existed for addressing the strengths and weaknesses of every child. In 2006, when the first NYS ELA and Math assessment were given to students in grades 3 and 5, there were concerns about the results in grade 5. Only 75% of the students in grade 5 met the standards in ELA and 79% in math. In 2005, the same students, as fourth graders, achieved 93% proficiency on the Grade 4 ELA exam and 95% on the Grade 4 Math assessment. When analyzing and comparing the longitudinal data for the same group of students, there was very little correlation between the scores. There were some individual student weaknesses that could be addressed, but the bigger issue was the lack of differentiation of instruction by a classroom teacher. The situation was remedied by the voluntary relocation of that teacher to a secondary school assignment. Since then, all teachers effectively differentiate classroom instruction for all students.

More information on the New York State Testing Program can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/press-release/archive/home.shtml>

2. Using Assessment Results:

Data drives instruction at Brookside. When standardized test results are made available, they are immediately shared with the staff who utilizes the data to further differentiate and improve instruction. Because our diminutive size is a tremendous advantage, informal meetings can take place as soon as results are available.

Specific results for each student in math and ELA are made available through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Data Warehouse. Classroom teachers, the principal and appropriate support personnel analyze the data and determine trends, both positive and negative. We find that very often it is the way a question is written that causes students to answer incorrectly. For example, we discovered that the phrase “most likely” seemed to cause our students confusion when used in both the ELA and math assessments. To provide familiarity with this or other phrases, teachers use that specific term when creating classroom exams in any content area or have students create multiple choice questions utilizing these terms. Teachers also create parallel tasks like those on state exams, in all subject areas, to provide students with the opportunity to apply a particular type of questioning strategy frequently, especially in a non-testing situation. Often, students with similar needs are instructed together in order for like weaknesses and/or strengths to be addressed in a timely manner. However, it is our use of more authentic data (looking at student work, running records, student conferences, anecdotal records, observations, listening in on accountable talk, etc.) that really gives our staff the information they need to plan and differentiate instruction. At-risk students’ reading levels are informally assessed as many as three to four times a month using a variety of assessment tools, such as DRA, WRaP Kit, and running records. Each of these tools is capable of providing a teacher with an accurate reading level. Reading support personnel use only the DRA, whereas classroom teachers make use of running records in all grades and the WRaP Kit in grades 3 – 5. Because students have the opportunity to apply strategies in their leveled independent reading books not in a district-wide determined basal reader, student growth is detected much more quickly and literacy behaviors are revealed and corrected more rapidly.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

When New York State assessment results are made available, they are immediately shared with the staff and the PTA president. Within a few days, the results are published in the regional newspaper, Newsday. Once the scores become public, teachers will share trends with students and make them aware of their individual levels. Parents receive formal reports from Nassau Board of Cooperative Educational Services informing them of their child’s performance level. The report also includes general comments on weaknesses and strengths within their child’s overall performance on the exam. Since our PTA meetings are well attended, announcements are made regularly at these meetings regarding updated assessment results. Parents also receive notices from the principal with the most updated information. Parents are strongly encouraged to meet with classroom teachers, content area specialists and the principal to discuss individual student performances. All New York State assessment results, including the Grade 5 Social Studies assessment and the Grade 4 Science exam, are excellent (in 2007/2008, 100% of Brookside students achieved Level 3-4) so communicating with them is a pleasure. On the district level, the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction gives a report about the assessment results annually to the Board of Education. The presentation includes detailed statistics for each school and comparative data across grades, schools and years and specific recommendations to strengthen any weaknesses. The presentation PowerPoint is placed on the district website, and a synopsis of the presentation is provided in the district newsletter each year. Parents or community members may call the Administrative Office to receive the full report for the district or by school.

At Brookside, we celebrate students’ work on a regular basis so parents have many opportunities throughout the school year to view and discuss their child’s progress with their teacher in authentic situations. Besides formal Parent/Teacher Conferences held in November and March, we have an annual Math Fair, Health Fair, and Black History Celebration. Monthly reading and writing celebrations occur across all grades. Parents are always welcome to any school event and can actively interact with their child and provide valuable feedback. Brookside School participates in the District-wide Spelling Bee, District-wide Math Night, District-wide Parent Workshops in Reading Strategies (which are given by Brookside’s Principal and Reading Specialist), District Fitness Jamboree, District String Festival, District Band and Chorus Festival and the Martin Luther King Celebration. We provide these opportunities so parents have a better sense of how their child thinks and responds to real life situations, academics, athletics and the arts - not just to standardized tests. At Brookside, parents, staff and the community know we address the whole child and embrace the understanding each child learns differently. In effect, we strive to maximize each child’s learning style.

4. Sharing Success:

The Baldwin Union Free School District has had four superintendents in the last six years. These changes created an inconsistent instructional philosophy for the entire district. Since the 2003-2004 school year, Brookside has used Balanced Literacy to guide its literacy practices in addition to using the workshop format to deliver math instruction. Brookside's successes have been noted by Baldwin's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Mike Roccoforte. Because Mr. Roccoforte has been the only consistent central office administrator in place for the last several years, he engaged Brookside's principal, Ivy Sherman, in many district-wide projects. In 2007, when the opportunity arose, Mrs. Sherman was invited to assume the role of Elementary School English Language Arts Correlator. In this position, she had the opportunity to oversee and drive staff development and literacy practices in the six other elementary schools in Baldwin. In June 2007, the elementary principals decided each school would need at least a part-time turnkey trainer to help move Balanced Literacy forward in their respective schools. Mrs. Sherman became the lead literacy staff developer at the elementary level. She developed and provided the professional development monthly to the literacy turnkey trainers. This professional development was then delivered to teachers at monthly Faculty Meetings. Mr. Roccoforte ensured that an additional hour was added to each Faculty Meeting within teacher's contractual guidelines. This model is still in place today.

In addition, Mrs. Sherman is in charge of K-5 literacy curriculum writing. The curricula guarantee that all elementary classrooms in the district are striving for high standards. The curricula are based on district trends on state assessments. After reviewing district-wide data, it appeared our students were not utilizing critical thinking skills to solve problems in their reading and writing. The focus of the new curricula is to teach critical thinking strategies in isolation and then re-teach them to be used simultaneously while reading fiction or informational texts. Each student has the opportunity to apply these skills and strategies while reading a "just right" book on their independent reading level. Mrs. Sherman is also coaching sixth grade ELA teachers at Baldwin Middle School to utilize a similar approach. Brookside's successful practices are being systematically shared and implemented throughout the Baldwin School District.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Our curricula, across all grades, are based on thematic units of study that build upon one another. Whether the themes are based on genre, content, or skill, teachers know what they have to teach and when. New York State provides subject area standards in order to guide lesson planning. Instruction revolves around the development of critical thinking skills. Standards-based content material is infused through various processes. The crucial skills we are working diligently to introduce, build upon, and eventually master are: monitoring comprehension, inferring, visualizing, questioning, understanding text structure, and summarizing and synthesizing. Through research and implementation, our academic team, comprised of the principal, reading teacher(s), math teacher, Language/Speech/Hearing teacher, and teaching assistant (any staff member is welcome to attend, if available) found that basic proficiencies should be developed through these deeper comprehension skills. They should serve as a foundation to create learners and thinkers who can solve problems more thoughtfully and independently in any content area.

ELA - Using the structure of Balanced Literacy, our students are immersed in authentic text and rich literature to gain a deeper understanding of authors' crafts. Students usually use "just right" texts of their own choosing. Teachers use the format of Reader's and Writer's Workshop to gradually release the responsibility of learning to the student. Students learn to develop their own voice as they write and how to get into an author's head as they read. Teachers begin with a whole class, 15-20 minute mini-lesson, paired or small group activity to practice what was just taught with peer support, and independent practice so teachers can assess understanding and degree of application. As students interact in small groups or independently, teachers work directly with individual students or small groups to remediate or enrich. Conferencing provides teachers with greater insight to further drive instruction. The use of data is critical to our planning process.

Math – Our math program can also be considered balanced. Teachers use a combination of conceptual philosophy as well as a more formal method of delivering math instruction. A strong numerical foundation is developed through the exploration of numbers and number combinations. However, teachers also use more traditional practices to help address multiple learning modalities. The New York State Math Standards guide what is taught and when, especially in the primary grades. Five content strands are taught through five developmentally appropriate process strands. The Math, Science and Technology Standards were updated in 2005, to reflect a more "real world" application by insuring conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem solving. The five content strands that are taught starting in pre-kindergarten are number sense and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and statistics and probability. Each grade level has performance indicators or student outcomes based on each of the content strands. A school-wide Math Fair takes place each year.

Social Studies/Science – Social Studies content is driven by the New York State Standards for Social Studies. Science content is regulated by the State with a curriculum review presently taking place. The New York State Science Standards also drive how instruction is delivered with its emphasis on process. Upper grade students are taught to use the scientific method as a format for exploration. Students in all grades study living things and earth science. All teachers deliver social studies subject matter primarily during the literacy block. Content material for both social studies and science is taught with an emphasis on higher-order thinking. Teachers use "big ideas" within history and science to understand how the world is impacted. Connections among events are discovered and vocabulary and text structure are stressed. Our teachers have an intrinsic understanding that content area vocabulary needs to be taught because it is specialized. The text structure of an informational text is going to be different than a fiction text. Students are taught the difference and how to use the structure of a text to increase his/her comprehension. Textbooks as well as authentic leveled texts are used to deliver subject matter. Instruction is delivered using a workshop format and research is on-going at all

grade levels. Various school wide events, such as the Harlem Renaissance Fair held during Black History Month, show uniqueness, innovation, and cultural enrichment and allows students to share their discoveries in these areas with the community.

Arts – We believe that classroom instruction is enhanced by the arts. All students receive visual arts and vocal music instruction from NYS certified teachers in these areas. Our vocal music teacher just received National Board Certification, the first in our district to do so and one of only a handful of teachers in elementary arts education in the state who has achieved this level of certification. Students in kindergarten through third grade receive vocal music instruction twice a week. Students in grades four and five attend vocal music class once a week. Vocal music class comprises much more than singing and includes movement, basic note and rhythm recognition, use of rhythm instruments, and recorder instruction in grade 2. Ten students in grade three are selected to participate in a Suzuki Violin program each year and all students in grades four and five may select any instrument to learn and play. Our part-time instrumental music teacher gives lessons to students in groups of three and four, two and a half days per week. Every student participates in our winter and spring concerts each year. The concerts highlight the vocal as well as instrumental talents of our students. In addition, our fourth and fifth grade instrumental music students often participate in regional events and music festivals and competitions such as the All-County Music Festival and All-County Art Exhibit. Classroom instruction is enhanced by the arts.

Students in grades four and five receive visual arts instruction twice per week and students in grades K – 3 attend art class once a week. Students study different artists and create pieces in the artist's style. Classroom teachers often collaborate with the visual arts teacher in order to enhance classroom projects. Students also design scenery in art classes for our concerts.

All students have the opportunity to attend class trips to local theaters and view musical as well as dramatic productions at our school. Our grade 5 students attend a Broadway show each spring. These experiences - at least four per school year - are paid for by our Parent-Teacher Association.

Our teachers integrate subject areas regularly in order to link learning experiences. Students gain a better understanding of the world we live in by making meaningful connections.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Brookside's reading curriculum provides a consistent philosophy among its instructional practices. We believe the heart of powerful literacy instruction is diagnostic and prescriptive in its approach. Teacher instruction is data driven and delivered to meet the specific needs of every child in every grade regardless of ability level. Because Vygotsky's research (1978) suggests that we as educators work within each child's proximal development, and because comprehension is critical to the reading process, Brookside has chosen Balanced Literacy as its reading curriculum.

Literacy instruction at Brookside occurs at the cutting edge of what children can already do independently and pushes them to the next level with support and guidance. Balanced Literacy provides teachers with the opportunity to teach through discussion, modeling a specific technique, while thinking and talking their way through a text. Discussion usually centers on deconstructing a text with a specific comprehension strategy in mind and demonstrating the thought process behind deciding which strategy to use and why. Instruction that enhances comprehension occurs when using materials at or above grade level. New comprehension strategies are introduced in isolation of the others, applied and practiced with guidance until mastery, and finally used in conjunction with all strategies previously taught. The workshop model serves as a framework for implementation. In other words, teachers demonstrate a strategy for problem solving during a whole group lesson, guide students through cooperatively applying that strategy, and then spend the majority of the literacy block working alongside students to determine the effectiveness of their own teaching and student learning.

Assessment drives instruction at Brookside and is collected both formally and informally. Brookside teachers provide individual support for students as they begin to independently apply new strategies in texts that are appropriate for their specific ability level, all the while the teachers are collecting data. This way, teachers can make informed decisions regarding the best next direction of their teaching to best meet the unique needs of each student.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

This question is for secondary schools only

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Social Studies instruction is taught during the literacy block except when the day's lesson is project-based. Reader's Workshop is used as the framework for the delivery of social studies and history subject matter. We have a large and growing collection of leveled, informational texts which allows for meaningful small group and one-to-one instruction. Teachers begin social studies content instruction with a read aloud, where they think through a portion of a text, modeling the use of a particular skill or strategy. There is a 15-20 minute whole class mini-lesson in which a concept/big idea, strategy or skill is introduced, reinforced, reviewed, explored or deconstructed. Students then work in pairs or small groups to apply and discuss what was taught. Teachers use this opportunity to meet with a small group or individual student to remediate, enrich, or assess. Students then practice independently while the teacher continues to collect data. Since 2004, 100% of our fifth grade students have met or exceeded the standards on the New York State Grade 5 Social Studies Assessment.

At Brookside, the focus of instruction is always based on improving the comprehension of information by teaching skills, strategies, text structures and features that are specific to informational texts and textbooks. Content at each grade level is driven by the New York State Standards. We have aligned our materials with the content the state has provided us. In addition, our school community is rich in living history, tradition, and African and American Black heritage. Many of our student's grandparents were involved in civil rights issues in the 1960's and 70's. We have had many grandparents over the last five years come to school and discuss their experiences with such great historical change-makers as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. They have shared genuine documents, photographs, letters, etc. We take advantage of these resources and our students have had many authentic hands-on experiences. We celebrate all cultures and value the contributions of all people. The events focus upon relevant student outcomes that take place throughout the year.

Character education is easily woven throughout our curriculum. This is evident in the nature of our instructional practices and our monthly "BBOTB" (Brookside Brings out the Best) Assembly, where students are recognized for excellent citizenship, character, effort, respect, neatness and organization, etc. All stakeholders participate in our BBOTB assemblies including all special area teachers, lunch aides, and parents who run special programs for the PTA. Brookside's social studies program is purposefully designed to recognize and meet the needs of all learners.

4. Instructional Methods:

Brookside Elementary School differentiates instruction using the gradual release of responsibility model. Using this model, classroom instruction in all curriculum areas is delivered via whole group, small group and individualized settings. Instruction is provided to students, then with students, and lastly, by students. All grade level curriculum is first disseminated to students within a whole group setting, where direct teaching occurs. Teachers deliver explicit instruction and model a strategy or technique they expect students to attempt and eventually master. Students are then guided through applying that strategy with the teacher, still within the whole group setting. While this large group application occurs, it allows the teacher to circulate quickly among students to check the effectiveness of instruction. Because of this, the classroom teacher has the opportunity to address and correct issues before they become incorrectly ingrained.

Teachers also deliver instruction in small group settings. Here, application occurs at the instructional level, at the cutting edge of what a child can do independently and where a child needs support. Students are pushed to the next level where they use what they already know and apply it - with teacher support - to help them demystify what they do not know. Materials used are chosen based on student ability and need. Materials can be at grade level, above grade level, or below grade level. Students are strategically grouped so instruction can be delivered effectively. Some students may need to be re-taught, while others students may need to be challenged beyond what is considered grade appropriate standards. In this setting, students are gathered in groups no smaller than two and no larger than six. Data collection occurs consistently so future lessons for either whole group or small group settings will be based solely on student need.

Students are also given the opportunity to work individually at applying the same strategy. Here, students apply new strategies within familiar boundaries so the only exercise given is the new strategy learned. Application at this stage occurs at the independent level, be it at grade level, below grade level, or above grade level. Teachers circulate among students collecting data on the effectiveness of instruction and looking for patterns of error to address in the next whole group lesson.

If teacher-gathered data reflects a severe lack of understanding on a student's part, the classroom teacher, in an individual setting, will then deliver instruction where familiar material may need to be re-taught in a different medium using new materials. Data collected from these sessions is extremely detailed and consistently analyzed to ensure progress is being made at an appropriate rate.

Using the gradual release of responsibility model ensures all students' needs are met regardless of ability level.

5. Professional Development:

Professional development is primarily delivered using a push-in, classroom-based model. The principal and our part-time literacy and math coaches work alongside classroom teachers to assist in delivering effective classroom instruction. Having students present allows teachers to apply learned practices immediately while teachers receive instant feedback. This hands-on approach has proven extremely valuable. The student outcomes at Brookside led to the eventual district-wide adoption of Balanced Literacy as the mandated philosophy for delivering literacy instruction. The workshop model is used to deliver most content area instruction.

Professional development at Brookside occurs using both the top down and bottom up models simultaneously. Formal staff development regarding literacy instruction occurs at Brookside monthly, via grade level meetings and faculty meetings, and is delivered by Brookside's part-time literacy coach and Mrs. Sherman. Informal professional development occurs consistently since our literacy coach is available two mornings a week to work directly alongside classroom teachers who request assistance in the implementation of Balanced Literacy. Teachers seeking assistance proves to have more permanent results fostering more positive student outcomes. Because our district has fewer resources in math, as Brookside's math coach is only available one morning a week due to budgetary constraints, staff development is provided three times a year at district-wide grade level meetings, in addition to the services provided by our part-time math coach. When outside conferences appear to be worthwhile, staff members can submit a request to attend. The Baldwin School District also holds two in-service days where teachers can select workshops from a large menu of varying topics.

Brookside's Principal, Ivy Sherman, is in charge of providing staff development to the District's literacy coaches so staff development in the area of literacy is always on-going and innovative. At Mrs. Sherman's suggestion, to assist in making district-wide systemic changes in the area of literacy instruction, beginning in the 2007-08 school year, the Baldwin School District hired the Australian United States Services in Education Corporation (A.U.S.S.I.E.). This collaboration has helped to move the entire district forward.

6. School Leadership:

Because Brookside has only 225 students, there is only one building administrator, the principal, Ivy Sherman. Mrs. Sherman is accountable for everything and everyone at Brookside. She is extremely visible and her open-door policy allows for immediate access by staff, students, and parents. Mrs. Sherman is very hands-on. She knows every student's learning style, strengths, weaknesses, and level of home support. No student at Brookside slips through the cracks. She stays involved in the students' education by looking at individual student work on a regular basis. She administers a "Principal's Problem of the Week," school-wide. The problem is disseminated at three levels - one for students in kindergarten and grade 1, one for students in grades 2 and 3, and one for students in grades 4 and 5. The problems are based on the present units of study in mathematics. Mrs. Sherman marks each problem using a rubric which the children have. She then uses the data to further advise teachers of particular student weaknesses. She also writes a monthly curriculum for a selected text. The book and its curriculum are distributed building-wide, not just in classrooms but in every room a student would enter, for example, the health office, psychologist's office, etc.

Due to Mrs. Sherman's vast knowledge of pedagogy, especially in the area of literacy, she is the first to get into a classroom and model a new strategy or technique for a teacher. The use of literacy and math coaches was not implemented until the 2007-08 school year. Prior to that all classroom-based coaching was done by Mrs. Sherman. As evidenced by our data from the last five years, she was the one who put our systemic changes into place.

Mrs. Sherman believes in a collaborative approach and works often with staff, students, parents, and central office administrators to plan school-wide events, discuss new initiatives, choose classroom materials, hire new staff, etc. Decisions are rarely made in isolation. Mrs. Sherman's 12 years of experience as an elementary principal - the first six in NYC - have benefitted our school. She runs a very structured academic environment yet her warm approach to the entire school community, especially the students, assists in making Brookside the wonderful school that it is.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

This section is for private schools only

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: NYS Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	100	97	100		
Level 4	72	50	52		
Number of students tested	39	38	33		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1	1		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4	100		100		
Level 4	75		55		
Number of students tested	28	32	22		
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	5	1		
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
Level 3 & 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested	5	1	9		

Notes:

New York State first administered the NYS Mathematics assessment to students in grade 3 in the 2005-2006 school year.

Our African-American subgroup during the 2006-2007 school year comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year: 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	98	87	91		
Level 4	35	18	12		
Number of students tested	40	38	33		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1	1		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4	100		87		
Level 4	36		9		
Number of students tested	28	32	23		
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	5	1		
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	1	9		

Notes:

New York State first administered the NYS English Language Arts assessment to students in grade 3 in the 2005 - 2006 school year.

Our African-American subgroup during the 2006-2007 school year comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	100	100	93	95	95
Level 4	38	59	67	73	38
Number of students tested	39	34	43	45	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4			92	97	
Level 4			54	69	
Number of students tested	33	29	26	32	33
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Levels 3 & 4			92		
Level 4			83		
Number of students tested	5	1	12	8	5
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	3	1	5	1

Notes:

In the 2005-2006 school year, the Mathematics assessment for students in grade 4 was moved to March to coincide with NYS Math testing of students in grades 3 and 5.

Our African-American subgroups during the 2007-08, 2006-07 and 2003-04 school years comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year: 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	97	100	93	84	78
Level 4	15	32	19	42	22
Number of students tested	39	34	43	45	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4			88	100	
Level 4			16	41	
Number of students tested	33	29	26	32	33
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Level 3 & 4			100		
Level 4			17		
Number of students tested	5	1	12	8	5
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	3	1	5	1

Notes:

In the 2005-2006 school year, the English Language Arts assessment for students in grade 4 was moved to January to coincide with NYS ELA testing of students in grades 3 and 5.

Our African-American subgroups during the 2007-08, 2006-07 and 2003-04 school years comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	100	96	79		
Level 4	62	58	19		
Number of students tested	34	45	48		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4		93	79		
Level 4		54	15		
Number of students tested	30	28	33		
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Levels 3 & 4		100	70		
Level 4		64	20		
Number of students tested	1	11	10		
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2	5		

Notes:

New York State first administered the NYS Mathematics assessment to students in grade 5 in the 2005-2006 school year.

Our African-American subgroup during the 2007-2008 school year comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year: 2006, 2007, 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Levels 3 & 4	100	91	75		
Level 4	26	16	25		
Number of students tested	35	45	48		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African-American					
Levels 3 & 4		93	67		
Level 4		11	18		
Number of students tested	30	28	33		
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Level 3 & 4		82	90		
Level 4		18	40		
Number of students tested	1	11	10		
4. (specify subgroup): Caucasian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested	4	2	5		

Notes:

New York State first administered the NYS English Language Arts assessment to students in grade 5 in the 2005 - 2006 school year.

Our African-American subgroup during the 2007-2008 school year comprised 80% or more of students on this grade level.

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